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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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New Jersey State FSA Newsletter

New Jersey Farm Service Agency

300 Clocktower Drive
Suite 202
Hamilton Square, NJ
08690

Phone:
609-587-0104

www.fsa.usda.gov/nj

State Committee:
Linda A. DuBois, Chair
Kurt W. Alstede
Samuel G. Conard

State Executive Director:
Barry Calogero

Farm Loan Chief:
Kevin P. Murphy

Please contact your [local FSA Office](#) for questions specific to your operation or county

Important Dates:

May 28: FSA Offices Closed

Growing a Dairy Farm One Scoop at a Time



Red Barn Milk Company was opened in July 2017 by Hun-Val Dairy Farm and Double Brook Farm. Pictured above (left to right) is FSA Farm Loan Specialist Shannon Barton, Jared Weeks, New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas Fischer and FSA County Executive Director Doreen Beruck.

By Lauren Moore, Farm Service Agency Public Affairs Specialist

Between late spring and the fall, residents and visitors of Ringoes, New Jersey, can enjoy locally-sourced ice cream, fresh bottled milk, hamburgers, hot dogs, bratwurst and more at the Red Barn Milk Company.

Red Barn Milk Company was opened in July 2017 by Hun-Val Dairy Farm and Double Brook Farm.

Hun-Val Dairy Farm is owned and operated by Jared and Treacy Weeks.

Building a Business (Growing a Dairy Continued...)

Jared Weeks grew up surrounded by dairy farms in rural New Jersey. After working on a neighbor's dairy farm, he started Hun-Val Dairy Farm in 2005 with a youth loan from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). He progressed to direct farm operating loans, which have been essential to the dairy's growth over the years.

"For producers just getting started, direct farm operating loans provide an essential gateway into agricultural production by financing the cost of operating a farm," said Kevin Murphy, farm loan program chief for FSA in New Jersey. "Jared is one of our successes. We really like to see these young farmers succeed."

In 2006, his first operating loan enabled him to purchase his starting herd of registered Brown Swiss and Holstein cows. His second operating loan in 2007 helped him purchase more cows to expand his herd and equipment to operate efficiently.

After renting a barn for a few years, Weeks was able to build a barn of his own in 2008 with the help of another operating loan.

"FSA gave me the chance to make it work," Jared said.

By providing access to credit, FSA's farm loan programs offer opportunities to family-sized farmers and ranchers to start, improve, expand, transition, market and strengthen their operations.

"FSA has been involved in every step of the progress of our business," he added. "FSA is sometimes the only foot in the door. It's a valuable asset to new farmers."

Sweet Venture

Hun-Val Dairy is now home to a herd of 200 cows. In 2015, it became the first dairy farm in New Jersey to receive the Jersey Fresh label on its products.

"It's a value-added program," Jared said. "It puts emphasis on local products, so the public can see our products came from a farm in New Jersey. It's been a great way to set our products apart on grocery shelves."

While all Hun-Val's products are single-sourced, the bottling process is outsourced. Their long-term goal is to bottle their own milk at the farm.

Most recently, in partnership with Double Brook Farm, a livestock operation, Jared and Treacy created Red Barn Milk Company, where people can enjoy locally-sourced products.

"It was apparent from the start that just milking wasn't going to cut it," said Jared. "One thing we have a lot of in New Jersey is people. Tying into that was our best bet."

In addition to the daily farm duties, both Jared and Treacy are active in the local 4-H in Hunterdon County, educating students about dairy cows and the industry.

"They are very dedicated to what they do and want to see the New Jersey dairy industry succeed," said Shannon Barton, FSA farm loan specialist.

More Information

For more information about FSA loan programs, contact your [local FSA Office](#) or visit www.fsa.usda.gov. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Here is the links to this story on Fence Post: <https://fsa.blogs.govdelivery.com/2018/04/13/growing-a-dairy-farm-one-scoop-at-a-time/> and on Farmers.gov: <https://nracs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=1963a499a7364929b59a4b1f3920e66>

Submit Loan Requests for Financing Early

The Farm Loan team in New Jersey is already working on operating loans for spring 2018 so it is important that potential borrowers submit their requests early so they can be timely processed. The farm loan team can help determine which loan programs are best for applicants.

FSA offers a wide range of low-interest loans that can meet the financial needs of any farm operation for just about any purpose. The traditional **farm operating and farm ownership loans** can help large and small farm operations take advantage of early purchasing discounts for spring inputs as well expenses throughout the year.

Microloans are a simplified loan program that will provide up to \$50,000 to eligible applicants. These loans, targeted for smaller operations and non-traditional operations, can be used for operating expenses, starting a new agricultural enterprise, purchasing equipment, and other needs associated with a farming operation. The staff at New Jersey FSA County offices can provide more details on farm operating and microloans and provide loan applications. Loans to beginning farmers and members of underserved groups are a priority.

Other types of loans available include:

Marketing Assistance Loans allow producers to use eligible commodities as loan collateral and obtain a 9-month loan while the crop is in storage. These loans provide cash flow to the producer and allow them to market the crop when prices may be more advantageous.

Farm Storage Facility Loans can be used to build permanent structures used to store eligible commodities, or for storage and handling trucks, or portable or permanent handling equipment. A variety of structures are eligible under this loan, including bunker silos, grain bins, hay storage structures and refrigerated structures for vegetables and fruit. A producer may borrow up to \$500,000 per loan.

Please call your [local FSA Office](#) if you have questions about any of the loans available through FSA.

Farm Service Agency Makes Administrative Change to the Livestock Indemnity Program

Starting today, agricultural producers who have lost livestock to disease, resulting from a weather disaster, have an additional way to become eligible for the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#).

In the event of disease, this change by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) authorizes local FSA county committees to accept veterinarian certifications that livestock deaths were directly related to adverse weather and unpreventable through good animal husbandry and management. The committees may then use this certification to allow eligibility for producers on a case-by-case basis for LIP.

LIP provides benefits to agricultural producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather, disease or by attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government. Eligible weather events include earthquakes, hail, tornadoes, hurricanes, storms, blizzard and flooding.

Producers interested in LIP or other USDA disaster assistance programs should contact their [local FSA Office](#).

Pest Alert - Spotted Lanternfly

The spotted lanternfly is an invasive pest, primarily known to affect tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). It has been detected on many host plants, including apples, plums, cherries, peaches, nectarines, apricots, almonds, and pine. It also feeds on oak, walnut, poplar, and grapes. The insect will change hosts as it goes through its developmental stages. Nymphs feed on a wide range of plant species, while adults prefer to feed and lay eggs on tree of heaven (*A. altissima*).¹ If allowed to spread in the United States, this pest could seriously harm the country's grape, orchard, and logging industries.

Description (click [here](#) for additional pictures)

Adult spotted lanternflies are approximately 1 inch long and one-half inch wide, and they have large and visually striking wings. Their forewings are light brown with black spots at the front and a speckled band at the rear. Their hind wings are scarlet with black spots at the front and white and black bars at the rear. Their abdomen is yellow with black bars. Nymphs in their early stages of development appear black with white spots and turn to a red phase before becoming adults. Egg masses are yellowish-brown in color, covered with a gray, waxy coating prior to hatching.



Damage

Both nymphs and adults of spotted lanternfly cause damage when they feed, sucking sap from stems and leaves. This can reduce photosynthesis, weaken the plant, and eventually contribute to the plant's death. In addition, feeding can cause the plant to ooze or weep, resulting in a fermented odor, and the insects themselves excrete large amounts of fluid (honeydew). These fluids promote mold growth and attract other insects.

What can you do

- Inspect your trees and plants for signs of this pest, particularly at dusk and at night when the insects tend to gather in large groups on the trunks or stems of plants.
- Inspect trees (in particular, tree of heaven), bricks, stone, and other smooth surfaces for egg masses.
- **If you find an insect that you suspect is the spotted lanternfly, please contact the New Jersey Spotted Lantern-fly Hotline at 1-833-223-2840 (BADBUG0) or SLF-plantindustry@ag.nj.gov**

For more information on the Spotted Lanternfly please click [here](#) or visit the APHIS website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/resources/pests-diseases/hungry-pests/the-threat/spotted-lanternfly/spotted-lanternfly>

USDA to Immediately Assist Producers for Qualifying Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program Losses

\$34 Million in Payments for 2017 Losses Part of Broad Suite of Programs Aiding Ag Operations

USDA will issue \$34 million to help agricultural producers recover from 2017 natural disasters through the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP), which covers losses not covered by certain other USDA disaster assistance programs. These payments are being made available today, and they are part of a broader USDA effort to help producers recover from hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, wildfires and drought. A large portion of this assistance will be made available in [federally designated disaster areas](#).

ELAP aims to help eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, certain adverse weather events or loss conditions, including blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by other disaster assistance programs such as the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program \(LFP\)](#) and the [Livestock Indemnity Program \(LIP\)](#).

The increased amount of assistance through ELAP was made possible by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, signed earlier this year. The Act amended the 2014 Farm Bill to enable USDA's [Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA) to provide assistance to producers without an annual funding cap and immediately for 2017. It also enables FSA to pay ELAP applications as they are filed for 2018 and subsequent program years.

Other USDA Disaster Assistance Programs

The Act removed program year payment limitations and increased the acreage cap for the [Tree Assistance Program](#) (TAP), a nationwide program that provides owners of orchards, vineyards and nurseries with cost share assistance to replant eligible trees, bushes, and vines following a natural disaster. For example, the program will help owners of citrus groves in Florida, avocado trees in California, coffee plantations in Puerto Rico and vineyards reduce the cost of replanting, and speed recovery from the loss of fruit and nut trees, bushes, and vines.

Prior to the Act, there was a combined program year payment limitation of \$125,000 for ELAP, LIP and LFP per person or legal entity. The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) had its own \$125,000 payment limitation. The Act removed the program year per person and legal entity payment limitation for LIP and TAP. As a result of the Act, a \$125,000 per person and legal entity single payment limitation applies to the total amount of program year payments received under both ELAP and the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#) (LFP) and program payments under LIP and TAP no longer have payment limits.

Under the updated program, as amended by the Act, growers are eligible to be partly reimbursed for losses on up to 1,000 acres per program year, double the previous acreage limit of 500 acres.

In total, it is estimated that the Act will enable USDA to provide more than \$3 billion in disaster assistance, including the \$2.36 billion announced last week to be made available through FSA's new 2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program. This includes \$400 million made available for the [Emergency Conservation Program](#), which helps farmers and ranchers repair damage to farmlands caused by natural disasters. As signups across the country are completed, additional applications will be funded.

According to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the United States was impacted by 16 separate billion-dollar disaster events in 2017 including: three tropical cyclones, eight severe storms, two inland floods, a crop freeze, drought and wildfire. More than 25 million people – almost eight percent of the population – were affected by major disasters. From severe flooding in Puerto Rico and Texas to mudslides and wildfires in California, major natural disasters caused catastrophic damages, with an economic impact totaling more than \$300 billion.

For Assistance

Producers with operations impacted by natural disasters and diseases in 2018 are encouraged to contact their [local FSA Office](#) to apply for assistance through ELAP, TAP, LIP and LFP. Producers with 2017 ELAP claims need to take no action as FSA will begin paying those claims today.

Double-Cropping

Each year, state committees will review and approve or disapprove county committee recommended changes or additions to specific combinations of crops.

Double-cropping is approved when the two specific crops have the capability to be planted and carried to maturity for the intended use, as reported by the producer, on the same acreage within a crop year under normal growing conditions. The specific combination of crops recommended by the county committee must be approved by the state committee.

Double-cropping is approved in New Jersey on a county-by-county basis. Contact your office for a list of approved double-cropping combinations for your county or [click here for a complete list](#).

A crop following a cover crop terminated according to termination guidelines is approved double cropping and these combinations do not have to be approved by the state committee.

USDA Reopens Enrollment for Improved Dairy Safety Net Tool

USDA's Farm Service Agency encourages dairy producers to consider enrolling in the new and improved Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy), which will provide better protections for dairy producers from shifting milk and feed prices. With changes authorized under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) has set the enrollment period to run from April 9, 2018 to June 1, 2018.

About the Program:

The program protects dairy producers by paying them when the difference between the national all-milk price and the national average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount elected by the producer.

Changes include:

- Calculations of the margin period is monthly rather than bi-monthly.
- Covered production is increased to 5 million pounds on the Tier 1 premium schedule, and premium rates for Tier 1 are substantially lowered. An exemption from paying an administrative fee for limited resource, beginning, veteran, and disadvantaged producers.
- Dairy operators enrolled in the previous 2018 enrollment period that qualify for this exemption under the new provisions may request a refund.

Dairy operations must make a new coverage election for 2018, even if you enrolled during the previous 2018 signup period. Coverage elections made for 2018 will be retroactive to January 1, 2018. All dairy operations desiring coverage must sign up during the enrollment period and submit an appropriate form (CCC-782) and dairy operations may still "opt out" by not submitting a form. All outstanding balances for 2017 and prior years must be paid in full before 2018 coverage is approved.

Dairy producers can participate in FSA's MPP-Dairy or the Risk Management Agency's Livestock Gross Margin Insurance Plan for Dairy Cattle (LGM-Dairy), but not both. During the 2018 enrollment period, only producers with an active LGM-Dairy policy who have targeted marketings insured in 2018 months will be allowed to enroll in MPP-Dairy by June 1, 2018; however, their coverage will start only after active target marketings conclude under LGM-Dairy.

USDA has a web tool to help producers determine the level of coverage under the MPP-Dairy that will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The online resource, which will be updated and available by April 9 at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, smartphone, tablet or any other platform.

USDA is mailing postcards advising dairy producers of the changes. For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy or contact your [local FSA Office](#).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).